

BACK-TO-SCHOOL!

A quick check-in for what's been happening at school this summer and what's ahead for the start of the 23-24 year!

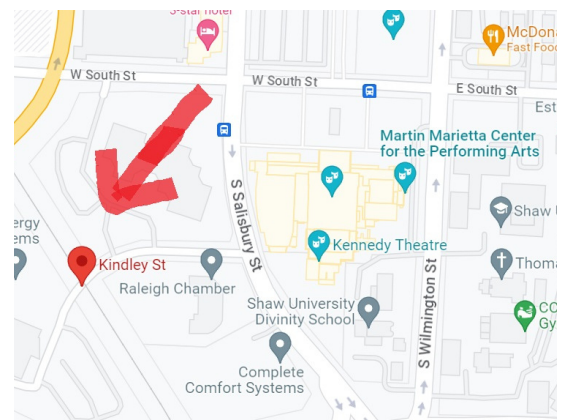


NEW BUILDING UPDATE

Progress continues towards our K-8 home. We're closer than we've ever been!

We still can't share a ton of details, but things have really been looking promising these past few months. Josh and the Facilities Committee have been busy working with Rosewood Strategies, our development partner, on fully exploring the possibility of building our new home on our plot of land on Kindley Street. As of this writing, things are looking good! Simultaneously, multiple properties in and around downtown have been and are being vetted as backup options.

Our leases at both campuses are set to expire at the end of this school year, but we do not expect to move next summer. Never fear! We have multiple contingencies planned, including the possibility of extending our leases on both campuses or finding temporary space while we build our new building. We know that last part seems daunting, but the market and economy are very much against us and we feel it will be a small price to pay for the building of our dreams.



INSIDE:

- New Staff Members
- Summer Programming
- Key Information from our Student Services Team
- Important Dates

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

The First Day is
Wednesday,
August 16th

Did You Know?

Public Charter Schools receive our funding based on our "ADM" or "Average Daily Membership" which is calculated starting the first day of school. Our funding for the WHOLE YEAR is dependent on having all our enrolled students present from the first day! Please make every effort to have your scholar with us in school on Wednesday August 16th. Not only does being here on the first day help set them up for success academically and socially, but it's a huge help to the school financially as well!

NEW to EXPLORIS? You must be present in school on the first day in order to be fully enrolled and to retain your lottery offer. Please reach out to Leadership@Exploris.org immediately if you think your scholar will NOT be here on the first day of school on Wednesday 8/16/23.

Kindergarten Welcome

Staggered Entry

In order to better help our littlest scholars be successful, kindergarten students will have a staggered entry. Please watch your email for details about dates and times for attendance.



Our K-Team!

Jen Christianson
Jacquetta Zimmerman
Melissa Conway

Before and After Care

Exploris offers before and after school care for families who need to drop off or pick up their scholars earlier or later than school a sliding scale fee. Directions for how to sign up will be emailed shortly.





6TH GRADE WELCOME CAMP



Rising 6th Graders

You're invited to join us for a morning to get to know Exploris Middle School and our activities & routines! It's not too late to join us for the remaining dates!



Three Dates

All camps are from 8:30-12:30, with drop off beginning at 8:15 am

Thursday, July 27th
Tuesday, August 1st
Thursday, August 3rd



For Families, too!

Families are invited to park and join Deb in the front room for an informal meet & greet!

Rising 6th graders can choose any one of the above dates. Please check your email for details!

[Click this LINK to go to our Signup Genius page!](#)



Reminders

Please make sure your scholar has a refillable water bottle, a snack and a lunch, and is dressed for the weather-- they WILL be going outside!

Important Notes from our Student Services Team



Support is available!

As we prepare for the 23-24 SY we want to inform families about the various support our school offers. Read below to find out more information. If you have questions please email counselor@exploris.org

Students who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch have access to the following programs through a free or reduced rate:

- Before and Aftercare Programming
- Panera Bread Program: Goes home with students on Monday afternoon
- Backpack buddies and/or food pantry: Students or Families can shop and take home from The Exploris Food Pantry
- Access to breakfast and/or snacks for school

If you are interested in any of these please click here to complete this form- [Student Support Form](#)

TITLE 1 SCHOOL



EXPLORIS IS A TITLE ONE SCHOOL

Here's what that means for you!

Title I School: The Exploris School

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, **The Exploris School** receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy, agreed on by such parents, that shall describe the means of carrying out the requirements of The Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) Section 1116.

Please take a moment to review our Parent Family Engagement Policy and provide us with any feedback or questions you might have by [completing this form.](#)

[Parent Engagement Policy](#)

[Política de Participación de los Padres: Español](#)



LUNCH ORDERING OPENS AUGUST 2ND

This year Exploris will continue partnering with My Hot Lunch Box, a program that allows schools to choose local vendors and allows families to place orders for lunches to be delivered directly to school.

When do I need to place, edit, or cancel my order?

Ordering closes at noon on the day prior to the delivery day. This allows vendors adequate time to prepare food and gives parents time to order. Vendors will receive final orders at noon day before delivery. This means any cancellations need to be made by this time as well.

Will I receive a refund for a cancelled meal?

We offer credits, not refunds, within our ordering system if a meal is cancelled before the deadline. If there is an issue with a meal or it is missing, our Customer Service Team will need to be contacted in order to issue a credit.

How can I see the lunch menu?

Once you have created an account, you can view the daily menus on the Lunch Calendar page by clicking on the day of the week. You can also select the "Your Orders" tab to the left of the calendar to view any pending or paid orders as well as your transaction history.

Who prepares and delivers the meals?

We work with local, high-quality restaurants that we pre-approve. They are expected to be prompt and deliver hot, fresh meals to your school.

What forms of payment do you accept?

We accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, American Express and Debit Cards (with a Visa or MasterCard logo).

If you have any additional questions Please Call My Hot Lunchbox: 888-894-8295

Exploris Lunch Vendors

Lunch Vendors for 23-24 will be Tropical Smoothie, Stephenson's Bakery, Jersey Mikes, Mama Crowes and Demos Pizza





WELCOME TO MY HOT LUNCHBOX!

We make lunch easy by offering a wide variety of options from your child's favorite restaurants! Below are the instructions to get you started.

HOW TO CREATE AN ACCOUNT:

1

GO TO

<https://ordernow.myhotlunchbox.com/sign-up>

2

CLICK

'Create an account' then click 'Order Now' under the Customer field

3

CREATE

Fill in all required fields to create your account and be sure to add a profile for each student you are ordering for

Looking to make things easier?

Scan this QR code to take you directly to our sign-up page!



Questions?

For technical problems or questions regarding food, policies, missed or late orders, credits, and cancellations, please email info@myhotlunchbox.com or call (888) 894-8295



Delivering Thousands of Lunches to Schools Nationwide

My Hot Lunchbox is a quick and easy lunch solution that offers your child's favorite restaurants, delivered to your school. We focus on having a variety of delicious options every day of the week, providing parents an alternative to packing lunch!

Order in Advance

Ordering is opened two weeks before school begins so you will have plenty of time to look through the menus and order. You will get an email when ordering has opened for your school along with instructions on how to create an account. You can add, edit, or cancel an order up to 12 PM, noon, the day prior to delivery!

Allergen Labeled & Customizable

Worried about a food allergy or dietary restriction? All menu items are allergen labeled on the lunch calendar and customizations are available from most of our vendors. Just be sure to voice these concerns and we will do everything we can to meet your school's needs!

Program Features

My Hot Lunchbox provides a variety of features to make ordering lunch even easier! Our system allows you the option to copy an order and repeat through a selected date. We also offer a 'Subscription' feature so you can pick your favorites, copy them, and only be charged weekly!

Questions about the lunch program?

Please email us at info@myhotlunchbox.com, call (888) 894-8295, or reach out to us on social media @myhotlunchbox



Nut-Free Campus



In order to protect all of our students, Exploris is a peanut and tree-nut free school. Please read the [Guidelines for a Nut-Free Campus](#) before sending any food items to school.

Need Suggestions for Allergen-Friendly Items to Pack? Click below & Check out these resources:

- [Nut-Free School Lunch Ideas](#)
- [Over 70 Allergy-Free Brands](#)
- [Peanut-free Snacks for School](#)



Welcome Our Newest Teammates

SJ CASAR

6th Grade Humanities (*she/her*)

SJ has over 20 years experience teaching English, History, and Latin and has a teaching style that promotes active learning and utilizes storytelling to engage students and provide context for the subject matter.

She is the author of three textbooks for Duke TIP and previously served in classroom and leadership positions at Research Triangle High School, Triangle Science and Math Academy, and was part of the founding team for Raleigh Charter High School. She has frequently led student trips abroad and founded student clubs in Latin and Classical Studies. SJ holds a North Carolina teaching license and a Master of Arts in teaching.



TACCATA JAMES

4th grade Crew Teacher

I am excited to join the Exploris community because I believe Exploris fosters a true learning model through the four core pillars: Global Education, Project Based Learning, Co-Teaching, and Responsive Classroom. These four core pillars represent how I envision an ideal learning environment, mixed with a little Miss Frizzle (from *The Magic School Bus*). I am excited to bring my passion for engaging teaching, learning and fun exploration to the Exploris community!

A few things to know about me... I am a foodie! I love trying different restaurants in the Triangle area and beyond. I am an introvert who loves my 7-year-old daughter, reading on the beach, hot yoga, fitness boot camps, and good food!

Every day that I am able to be present with my students makes for an awesome day at school. It's awesome when they come back and tell me how much they enjoyed a book, project or real-world learning experience.



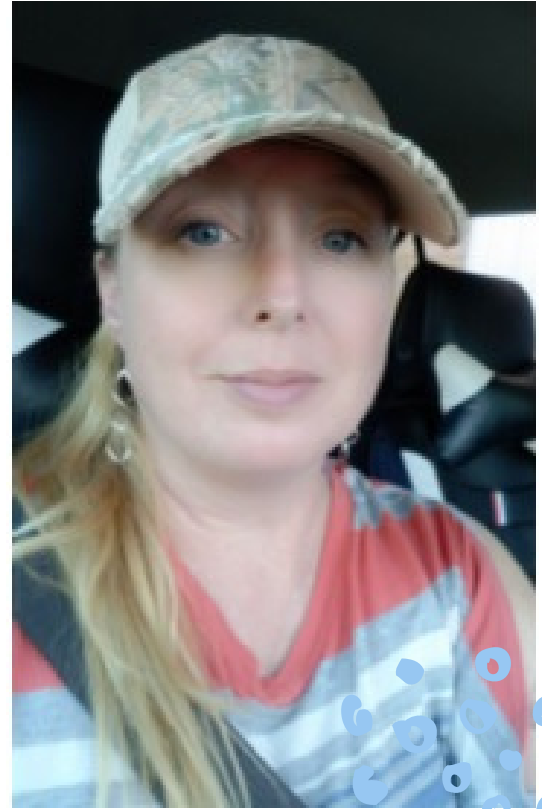
Welcome Our Newest Teammates

DAWN WILLIAMSON

MS EC

I am thrilled to join the Exploris team. I have Bachelor of the Arts degree in Sociology from Cedar Crest College in Allentown, Pennsylvania and a Master of Education in Special Education from Fayetteville State University. I was employed with Cumberland County Schools for 15 years and I have been teaching at a private special needs school in Cambridge, England for the last 3 years.

My husband is in the US Army. Combined, we have 3 children ages 23, 17, and 14. We have 2 dogs and 1 cat. I have lived in North Carolina for 19 years in total. I look forward to working together to help your child grow, learn, and create wonderful memories!



HOPE WOODWORTH

6th Humanities (she/her)

Hope Woodworth is overjoyed to be a part of the 6th grade team. A graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, she holds a Bachelors of Arts in Education in Human Development and Family Studies, and a Bachelors of Arts in Linguistics. During college she spent a few years teaching science at summer camps and in-school field trips. As a first-year teacher, she was the head of the middle school social studies department at a brand new charter school in North Carolina. When she is not at school, you can find her making weird earrings, crocheting, or spending time with her boyfriend and their pet rats.



Welcome Our Newest Teammates

KEITH KNOX 5th Grade Crew Teacher

I am very excited about joining the Exploris community and I look forward to making the biggest difference in the lives of all the stakeholders and the community that surrounds this great school. Three things many people don't know about me is that I can sew, cook, and bake very well. The students during my visit to Exploris said I looked like Lebron James, but I'm terrible at Basketball. In my class, an awesome day is me finding the right balance of learning and having fun while learning. I love to see when students get into active learning in the classroom. The book that changed my life was *Linden Hills* by Gloria Naylor. This book is so powerful. Naylor shows how many things you assume to see or think you know can all be an illusion.



JESSICA HARRISON *Elementary EC*

Jessica joined the Exploris team part-time last winter and will return as a full time elementary EC teacher this year! She has over 20 years working with Special education and English Language Learners in elementary and middle school settings and has served as a compliance specialist and EC Coordinator to help guide special programs. She has mentored new teachers and holds an M.A.Ed. from Nova South Eastern University and a Bachelors of Arts in Education in Varying Exceptionalities & Exceptional Student Education from Florida Atlantic University. Jessica is a licensed teacher in North Carolina.

Welcome Our Newest Teammates

AMANDA WHITTINGTON *5th Grade*

I've never been more excited to embark on a new journey with my Exploris family. This school has a special place in my heart and I look forward to expanding the connections we make with our scholars, community and the world. While I spent the previous 2 years teaching in the middle school, I look forward to the transition to working with elementary age students.

A few of my passions... I love anime, art, crafts, and walking barefoot in the grass. I love to travel, cook and am a writer!! I believe in the impossible. For me, an awesome day is a day where everyone in my classes smiles, laughs and takes a moment to connect and build meaningful relationships. It's a day of exploration and creativity where everyone can be authentically themselves.



MARCELLA BRIDESON

7th Grade Language Arts

Marcella is a native of Raleigh. She went to Appalachian State University for a B.A in Psychology and then moved to Virginia to attend The University of Virginia to acquire her Master's in Teaching, where she worked as a reference librarian in the special collections.

For the last three years, she has worked in middle schools and has a passion for project-based and student-centered learning. She has helped students learn through projects, interests, and community projects. She has a goofy and loving dog named Moes and loves reading, crocheting, and hockey!

Welcome Our Newest Teammates

AUSTIN COLE *3rd Grade Crew Teacher*

I'm excited to return to Exploris to be a part of its shared and dynamic understanding of education. There is an invitation of respect and belonging that is palpable at Exploris. Before teaching the last few years in England, I served as a Teaching Partner at Exploris!

Three things to know about me are: I taught myself to play guitar around the age of 9, I can speak German (somewhat!) fluently and I believe only boring people get bored. There is always something to do!

An awesome school day for me is one where you see a student find their confidence and take pride in something. Growing up, the beginning of my love for music came from watching the film *Fantasia*. I would watch it everyday as a small child!



MARIAH PERRY *7th Grade Language Arts*

Mariah firmly believes that education goes beyond the confines of a classroom, and she is committed to empowering students to actively engage with their community and make meaningful contributions. As a former student of The Exploris School, she personally experienced the transformative power of an educational institution that wholeheartedly embraces this mission. Mariah is a proud graduate of the University of North Carolina at Asheville, where she obtained her degree in Environmental Policy and Management with a minor in Economics. During her leisure time, Mariah can often be found immersed in nature, enjoying activities like hiking and camping.

Familiar Faces in New Places



- **Mary McWay** will be the newest member of the middle school Global Arts team, leading the newly reimagined Connected World course after many years as a 7th grade crew teacher
- **Sarah Esser** will move from working with the Exceptional Children's team to the Interventions Teaching partner role at middle school, supporting our fledgling Seminar program



Meet-the-Teacher Night

★ Monday, Aug. 14th

★ 4:00pm-6:00pm

★ Drop-in

Staff will be on hand on both campuses for families to drop by for an informal chance to meet your crew teachers, see the classrooms, and say hello!

School Supply Lists

For families who'd like to get a head start and/or take advantage of back to school sales we are happy to offer these links. PLEASE NOTE THAT IF ANY OF THESE REQUESTS IS A HARDSHIP FOR YOUR FAMILY, JUST REACH OUT TO THE SCHOOL.

Your teacher, counselor, or campus director will help make sure your scholar has what they need.



Elementary

Click on the grade level to see the list of requested supplies.

[Kindergarten](#)

[1st Grade](#)

[2nd Grade](#)

[3rd Grade](#)

[4th Grade](#)

[5th Grade](#)

Middle

Click on the grade level to see the list of requested supplies.

[6th Grade](#)

[7th Grade](#)

[8th Grade](#)



Popscicles on the Playground

Sunday, Aug. 20th

Exploris Elementary School

RAINDATE: 8/27/23



Exploris Families are all invited to drop in and get to know one another!

Meet your PTO team, meet other families and meet Exploris teachers! No cost and all family members are invited.





CARPOOL



We get it: waiting in the car line is never anyone's favorite part of the day. Please follow these guidelines to help everyone move as quickly as possible, and most importantly-- as SAFELY as possible. And please remember these guidelines are the requirements we are given by the City of Raleigh so they must be followed by all.

[Middle School Carpool Map, Directions, and Tips](#)

[Elementary School Carpool Map, Directions, and Tips](#)



For All:

- Make sure anyone who drives your scholar to/from school is aware of these policies
- Remember: RIGHT TURNS ONLY
- Stay alert and avoid cell phone use
- Don't enter the school lots until directed by a staff member. This is to make sure the line does not get blocked from the beginning



It's time to sign up for the **EXPLORIS FAMILY CARPOOL MAP!**

Each year, Exploris PTO volunteers help families connect by posting the Exploris Family Carpool Map. Whether you need a daily carpool, occasional rides, or just want to connect with families that live near you, we hope you'll opt-in to this map. The map will be updated beginning July 25. We'll keep it updated for about six weeks so everyone will have time to get carpools lined up.

Visit ExplorisPTO.org to learn more!

- **Password Protected: The Family Map and the School Directory will be posted on password protected pages on the PTO website. You will be emailed the password once your information has been added. Please do not share the passwords publicly.**
- **Get on the Map! Even if you're not sure if you will be carpooling, please fill out the form. Your address will be on the map, making it easier to find Exploris families in your neighborhood.**



**Sign up for the Exploris
Family Carpool Map!**

EXPLORISPTO.ORG



Get Emails from the Exploris PTO!

The Exploris Parent Teacher Organization sends a weekly schoolwide email called the Monday Minute.

Please subscribe for the PTO email list on their website (enter your email address and click "follow":

<http://explorispto.org>.

Follow the PTO on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, too! @explorispto
#explorispto



CHECK OUT THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!



**MONDAY,
AUGUST 14TH**

**Meet-the-Teacher Night!
4:00-6:00 pm
at each campus.
Drop in anytime
between those hours!**



**WEDNESDAY,
AUGUST 16TH**

**First Day of School for the
2023-2024 school year!**



**SUNDAY
AUGUST 20TH**

**Popsicles on the
Playground, hosted by
our PTO at the Exploris
Elementary Campus
4:30-6:30 pm.**

Enjoy the rest of the summer
and we look forward to
seeing everyone soon!

